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THE NUR AF SHAN

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No. 1

Editorial Notes.

We doubt the Word that tells us, "Ask,"
And we shall have our prayers.
We turn our thoughts as to the task,
With will constrained and rare,
And yet we have—these scanty prayers
Yield gold without alloy,
O God! But he who trusts and dares
Must have a world of joy.

—George McDonald

We have entered upon a new year of service and responsibility. We know not what it will bring to us of joy or sorrow. To the human eye the outlook is full of anxiety and portents of evil. The gaunt figure of Famine is already seen stalking through our land. As to Plague the expectation is that we shall have another visitation. In our own India, the spirit of unrest seems to have abated, but in Russia, Persia and elsewhere the outlook is lurid. In America the financial outlook is very bad. One steel corporation closed down, thus throwing 30,000 men out of employment. Another corporation by closing down threw 50,000 people out of employment. These are samples of what has been done in many places, perhaps upon a smaller scale but yet working havoc for the working men. The banks, taking advantage of a law permitting them to oblige 60 days notice before depositors might draw out their money, have made it hard for the people to get cash for ordinary business. On the other hand, the promises of God are sure and His hand is stretched out to help. An encouraging

sign is that many are turning to God in prayer and thanksgiving. Material losses have been compensated for by spiritual gains. The outlook in many places is brightening with the hope of religious revival. Let us all go forward in the path of duty, striving to do the will of God, assured that by first seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all things really needful will be given to us.

The Week of Prayer is now upon us with its splendid opportunity for a world-wide intercession. The movement which led to this annual prayer week began in India in the last weeks of 1857, where the missionaries gathered within the charred walls of their Church at Ludhiana. The Spirit of God came upon them in a wonderful manner and the inspiration came to the venerable Dr. John H. Morrison to suggest the memorialising of the Evangelical Alliance to call for a week of prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all nations. Many blessings have followed the faithful observance of this holy week. May all God's people be faithful in using the opportunity which this week affords.

Since our last issue, our hearts have been made sad by the news of the sudden death of Mrs. Datta, the wife of Dr. D. N. P. Datta, Civil Surgeon at Hoshiarpur. Mrs. Datta was the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Chatterjee for nearly forty years' missionary at Hoshiarpur. Her life as a daughter and as a wife, in the home and in the Church was that of a Christian exemplifying the life of her Saviour. May the Blessed Com-

forter uphold and comfort the bereaved husband and the sorrowing hearts of parents, brother and sisters.

We are glad to print for the benefit of our readers the following extract from the *Arya Patrika* as exemplifying a spirit of fairness, which portends a distinct advance in religious tolerance and fairness in religious discussion. He says:

"An interesting controversy is going on in the columns of the *Epiphany*, a Christian weekly of Calcutta, as to whether the Mohammadans worship idols or not. The charge was rebutted by a Mohammadan. Two rejoinders appear in the latest issue of our contemporary. One of them says that if the Mohammadans do not worship idols how is it that during 'peeria festival' they worship 'peers,' which are just like emblems of God. The other from Patna asserts that Mohammadans are seen going to worship *Sitla* of Anghnas Rama, a 'well' famous for Hindus in the vicinity of Komrar, and going to Gauges to worship sun on the feast of *Chutli*; and giving alms and propitiatory offerings according to the Hindu rites to a Brahmin, when the man was ill, and worst of all is the calling of charmers to expel evil-spirits. The Kazi of Agra, who should be presumed to be a master of Koran allows his females to go to worship *Sitla*."

"Such instances will be found in every province. Nevertheless the issues should not be confounded.

The issue before us is that Mohammadans have taken to idolatry it is an established fact and we think even sen-



sible Mohammedans themselves will hesitate in declining that Mohammadism has not been free from the evil influence of idolatrous Hinduism. But if the real issue is if Islam permits idolatry, it is yet to be established. Islam cannot be held responsible for the foibles and failings of its followers."

That the the great mass of ignorant Muhammadans living in the villages of the more remote districts in India and Malaysia are guilty of idolatry is attested by the constant efforts of the Hajis to reform their worship and divert them from idolatry. This fact does not in any militate against the character of Islam as a pure monotheism. Indeed it is the uncompromising attitude of Islam towards idolatry which accounts for its extensive propagation in the world. Its errors are manifold and, as a way of salvation from sin, the system has by twelve centuries experience been proved a failure. The lands dominated by Islam are witnesses to its insufficiency. The principles of righteousness, purity and love find but little in the social and national life. Womanhood is doomed to degradation and ignorance. Slavery is recognized as everywhere and always lawful, while a blind fatalism paralyzes the energies of national life and prosperity.

The discoveries of the Antiquarian still continue to bring us into closer touch with the achievements of the ancients in art and literature. One of the most important of the manuscripts recently found is thus described in a contemporary journal:

"The discovery of an Armenian translation of a theological work by Irenaeus, the famous bishop of Lyons, is the latest development of fresh interest in patristic literature. The manuscript was found in a remote Asiatic monastery. Its date is put at about 190. Inasmuch as Irenaeus was instructed by Polycarp, who was instructed by the apostle John, his testimony has always been regarded as peculiarly strong external witness to the teaching of the apostles. This book, called 'The

Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching," appears to have been written for the express purpose of bearing such testimony. The manuscript begins with a definition of Christian doctrine, which is elaborated with a history of revelation from the times of the prophets. A special discussion of the scheme of redemption follows, and after that an examination in detail of Messianic passages in the Old Testament. At the present moment perhaps the most interesting element in the discussion is the strong emphasis laid on the doctrine of the virgin birth. The whole treatise is of course distinctly trinitarian."

The importance of the doctrine of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus is thus set forth by the Rev. Dr. John Pulsford, as quoted in the British Weekly.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know, because they are spiritually discerned." The fleshly mind, therefore, denies that Christ was conceived of the Spirit of God; and affirms that he was not only "made of a woman," but that He was conceived of the will of the flesh and of the will of man. In short, that He had a human father. But what to the carnal mind is "foolishness," to the spiritual mind is "the wisdom of God." It seems to me to be most vital and essential to the whole scheme of New Testament Theology to maintain that Christ was conceived *not* of blood, *nor* of the will of the flesh, *nor* of the will of man, *but of God.*" I believe that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and that, immediately, directly and exclusively, God was His Father; so that He is strictly and truly God in our nature. I believe that the conception of human nature anew from God, and without the intervention of a creaturely father, is the secret corner-stone of Christianity. I believe that the denial of Christ's conception of the Holy Ghost takes away all ground for the regeneration of our nature, in any proper sense

of the word. Inasmuch as every human being, according to the course of nature, is conceived in sin, and born a fallen and depraved creature, if the only Son of God was not conceived of the Holy Ghost, there is, unto this day, no Saviour-Head of mankind. Quite consistently, therefore, those who deny the conception of Christ deny also the doctrines of human depravity, and of the new birth. But if, as we believe, the root and ground of our degeneracy were in Adam, it was necessary that the root and ground of our regeneration should be in Christ. As a fallen and corrupt spirit is actually in contact with us, and in us, by derivation from a fallen head; it was requisite, in order to our redemption, that the Unfallen and incorruptible Spirit should be actually in contact with us, and in us, by derivation from our new Head."

The fourth Annual General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in India met in Calcutta Dec. 28th. Some account of the meeting will appear in our next issue.

TEMPERANCE & PURITY.

Many Christian men, while glad to encourage all efforts of their fellow men, are persuaded that the only true remedy for the sin of intemperance lies in the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to regenerate the whole nature of man. The following story illustrates this point.

"Some years ago an infidel was lecturing against Christianity, and declared that the Gospel was a myth. A mill hand, who was listening, obtained leave to ask a question. "Thirty years ago I was a curse to this town—a slave to drink. Now you say that Christ is a myth. But when I tried, and friends tried, and the police and the magistrates and the wardens of the prison where rum brought me, all tried in vain, then Christ took hold of me, touched my heart, and made me a new man. And now I am a member of the church, a class leader, a superintendent of the Sunday school; and I ask if Christ is a myth, how comes it that the myth is stronger than all the others put together? Nay, say what you will," said he, "the Gospel is the power of God, even for the drunkard unto salvation."

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The essence of immorality is to make an exception of one's self.

Ten or twelve years ago a Mohammedan woman, who had been a servant in the family of a missionary and so knew what to expect from missionaries, came to beg me to care for a Mohammedan waif in whom she was interested. I said it was impossible I was then in charge not only of the evangelistic work of that district of nearly a million souls, but of the educational work, as well as a girls' orphanage and a Christian village. I said: "I am busy to the point of distraction, and I have no conveniences for the care of a boy. If it were a girl, I would gladly receive her into the orphanage. I can do nothing for a boy." But she said: "He is sick and miserable and hungry; he will die if you do not take him." There could be but one answer to this! So the next day Garinda was brought. He was all she had pictured! He was not only miserable and hungry and dirty, but diseased internally and all broken out in abscesses and sores, especially about his face. I gave him a little room in the row of outhouses and next to the garden, and set a Christian boy to look after him and cook his food; and in the evening I used to go out when the day's heaviest pressure was over to do what little I could for him. As I washed his wounds and tied on the iodoform and bandages, I told him what little his mind could grasp of the story of Jesus's love and power to save. But I found he was getting no better, so I turned him over to the Hindu doctor in charge of the government dispensary, who was not only a clever physician, but a warm personal friend of mine. It was perhaps a couple of weeks afterward that I was leaving him he put up his hands in petition and said, "Padri Sahib, I have a favor to ask." "What is it?" "Take me back to the mission house." "Why," I said, "you are getting good care and medicine here." "Yes, but I don't like it here; I did like it at the mission house. I liked to lie in the sunshine out in the garden." I turned to the doctor and said in English: "The boy wants to go home with me. What do you say?" He replied: "I've done all I could for the boy, and he is no better. The fact is that he is not going to get better; you might just as well take him home." I picked him up and laid

It is the rainbow and not the lightning that best proves God.
There is no truer mark of greatness than conformity to Christ.

TELEGRAMS.

London, Dec. 27.

Prince Beatrice, Daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh, has been betrothed to Prince Alfonso Bourbon.

London, Dec. 27.

Lloyds' Agent at Port Said reports that in consequence of the strike the harbour is blocked with colliers, which from the 26th instant have been compelled to anchor off the Port.

A conference of coal merchants and strikers at Port Said proved abortive, the latter insisting on an increase of five pence per ton of coal landed or shipped. Nearly a hundred tons are awaiting discharge.

London, Dec. 27.

Advices from Morocco state that General Drude is severely ill with malarial fevers and Colonel Bonleuard has assumed command of the French force at Casa Blanca.

General Damode succeeds General Drude forthwith. Reinforcement are being sent to Casa Blanca with a view to the advance into the Mediuna country.

London, Dec. 27.

Cholera is causing ravages in Mecca, Medina and Yambo. Over a hundred deaths have occurred.

London, Dec. 28.

The Times, in commenting on the Surat Congress, says that it is sure to be utilised by the advocates of the exclusion of Orientals from the Colonies, and suggests that the Imperial Conference should consider the question of Oriental immigration, that the Imperial Secretariat, pending the next meeting, should organise a commission of representatives from all the Dominions, India and the Mother Country, and that the evidence collected should be such as might convince some of the colonies of the impossibility of our banging the door against the growing population of the East and convince us that unrestrained immigration would be fatal to our civilization and race. Certain parts of the Empire might be reserved to Orientals.

The Daily News says that it hopes the fiasco at Surat may do good, and that the failure of the Moderates is due to the slow pace and grudging scope of the British reforms, and urges the adoption of a policy of restoring faith in British wisdom and justice.

The Tribune says it is glad to see that Lala Lajpat Rai did not belong to the party of violence, and believes that the conduct of the Extremists will effect a reaction favourable to the constitutional side of the native movements.

The Standard says that though it is premature to foresee the collapse of the movement, the events of Surat will convince people that the congress, when not actively mischievous, is the exact representation of what an Indian Parliament would be, namely, a political bear-garden.

London, Dec. 30.

A telegram from Wellington states that Mr. Keir Hardie has been capsized in an automobile and it is believed that his ribs are broken.

London, Dec. 28.

General Drude, lately commanding the French forces at Casa Blanca, has been appointed Commander of the Legion of Honour.

Allahabad, Dec. 29.

The Afghan authorities have lately had trouble with the unruly tribesmen in and beyond the Jadrin country, West of Khost.

The Mangal Jaji and Katwaz tribes are involved and their Jirgahs have been summoned to wait upon the Governor of the Khost. To emphasise this rumour a strong force of infantry has been marched towards Jadrin but the country is so difficult that punitive operations can scarcely be effective so late in the season. The Mangals in particular are notoriously disaffected but their political importance is small.

London, Dec. 31.

The British Post Office has been investigating delays to letters from Peking via Siberia. There is every prospect of satisfactory arrangement being made shortly.

The Sultan of Morocco has authorised France and Spain to control the contraband traffic in arms in Moroccan waters.

The Times correspondent at Lisbon reports that an alarming revolt has occurred in Portuguese Guinea, and Europeans are in urgent need of assistance. An expedition is to be sent.

A gas explosion occurred in the Rome Bourse which shattered the windows and brought down the roof.

A dozen stock brokers were more or less seriously injured.

Troops and firemen hastened to the scene and conveyed the injured to hospitals.

Acting on the recommendation of the Telegraph Committee the Government of India have decided to sanction the employment of women as signallers in the Telegraph Department. The general conditions of employment will be as follows:—Candidates must be between 18 and 30 years of age; (a) they must be unmarried and widows; (b) candidates must file a declaration and a guarantee signed by their parents or guardians, or some responsible authority, that they will live with their parents or guardians etc. or at some recognized institution; (c) candidates must possess the same educational qualifications as are required from men; (d) candidates must undergo a training of twelve months in the telegraph training classes, receiving during this period the same allowance, viz. Rs 20 a month as is drawn by male learners; (e) selected candidates on leaving the training classes will be on probation for one year. The following scale of pay will be granted to women signallers on appointment:—(a) At stations in India other than Rangoon and Madras Rs. 40, rising by annual increments of Rs. 20, commencing from the fourth year of service, to Rs. 80; (b) at Rangoon Rs. 50 rising by increment as in the case of (a) to Rs. 90; (c) at Madras Rs. 30 rising by the same increments as in (a) to Rs. 70. Service will be pensionable, and there will be no liability to transfer, but resignation will be compulsory in the event of marriage. The hours of work of women signallers will be from 8 a. m. to 3 p. m. The whole period of duty will, not, however, exceed seven hours in the twenty-four, and they will be exempted from duty on Sundays.

London, Dec. 31.

Mr. Keir Hardie's injuries are slight.

Rente learns that the utmost good feeling has been displayed throughout the Canadian and Japanese negotiations, anent emigration, and no dissensions have occurred.

The Foreign and Colonial Offices remained more or less in the background leaving the discussion to Japan and Canada.

Details will not be known until M. Lemieux, Minister of Labour, returns, when the complete views of the Dominion Government on the proposed arrangement will be communicated to London.

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